



Formation Devotional

March 6, 2020 Morning

Forming Worship, Life, and Ministry Together at Christ Covenant Church

Remind yourself that this morning marks another day to enjoy and glorify God. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.

Call to Prayer

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life. (Psalm 143:8)

Opening Prayer

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart, and especially the hearts of the people of this land, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 823)

Confession of Sin

Gracious Father, we confess that we have longed too much for the comforts and treasures of this world rather than for your enduring Kingdom. We have loved the gifts more than the Giver. In your mercy, help us to see that the things we strive for are shadows, but you are the substance; that they are quicksand, but you are a mighty rock; that they are shifting, but you are an anchor. Thank you for forgiving us through the riches of Christ and freeing us to live a new life, faithfully devoted to him. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Take a moment to confess your sins, knowing that he hears you, and respond in gratitude according to the assurance of grace.

Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 5:18-21)

Praying the Psalms

Read the psalm prayerfully back to God by faith in Christ.

Psalm 95

Let Us Sing Songs of Praise

Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;

let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

²Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

³For the LORD is a great God,

and a great King above all gods.

⁴In his hand are the depths of the earth;

the heights of the mountains are his also.

⁵The sea is his, for he made it,

and his hands formed the dry land.

⁶Oh come, let us worship and bow down;

let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!

⁷For he is our God,

and we are the people of his pasture,

and the sheep of his hand.

Today, if you hear his voice,

⁸ do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,

as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,

⁹when your fathers put me to the test

and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.

¹⁰For forty years I loathed that generation

and said, "They are a people who go astray in their heart,

and they have not known my ways."

¹¹Therefore I swore in my wrath,

“They shall not enter my rest.”

New Testament Reading

Luke was a Gentile (non-Jewish) physician who wrote for sophisticated non-Jewish readers. He records in great detail in order that Gentile readers would understand the universal appeal of the gospel. Luke also wrote the book of Acts.

Meditate on the passage, noting a few words or a phrase that stood out or a promise to meditate on today. Take them to God in prayer.

Luke 4

The Temptation of Jesus

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness ²for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. ³The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” ⁴And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’” ⁵And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, ⁶and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. ⁷If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” ⁸And Jesus answered him, “It is written,

“‘You shall worship the Lord your God,

and him only shall you serve.’”

⁹And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰for it is written,

“‘He will command his angels concerning you,

to guard you,’

¹¹and

“‘On their hands they will bear you up,

lest you strike your foot against a stone.’”

¹²And Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” ¹³And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Jesus Begins His Ministry

¹⁴And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

¹⁶And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. ¹⁷And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

¹⁸“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me

to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives

and recovering of sight to the blind,

to set at liberty those who are oppressed,

¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

²⁰And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” ²²And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, “Is not this Joseph's son?” ²³And he said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, “Physician, heal yourself.” What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.” ²⁴And he said, “Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. ²⁵But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, ²⁶and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. ²⁷And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.” ²⁸When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. ²⁹And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. ³⁰But passing through their midst, he went away.

Jesus Heals a Man with an Unclean Demon

³¹And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath, ³²and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority. ³³And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, ³⁴“Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.” ³⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent and come out of him!” And when the

demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm. ³⁶And they were all amazed and said to one another, "What is this word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!" ³⁷And reports about him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

Jesus Heals Many

³⁸And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. ³⁹And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.

⁴⁰Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. ⁴¹And demons also came out of many, crying, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

Jesus Preaches in Synagogues

⁴²And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, ⁴³but he said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose." ⁴⁴And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

Prayers of Intercession

Neighborhood

- Pray that the gospel would be experienced as good news to the poor and marginalized of Columbia.
- Pray for all the men, women, and children who have no place to call home. Pray they find shelter and access to adequate food and health care.
- Pray for those recovering from various addictions: that they would experience freedom and liberation from such debilitating diseases as alcoholism and drug addiction, and that they would find ultimate satisfaction in Christ.
- Pray for the leaders of our city to pursue justice especially for the most vulnerable of our city.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

Wonder what your next step in spiritual formation is? Consider getting involved in a Growth Group.

For a handy guide to the devotional elements and an archive of past issues, visit ccotc.org/devotional.